

FUTURE 'PAN FRIES'—Trout are hatched in this lake at the Antelope Valley ranch of Marc Mitchell, retired Los Angeles attorney. The valley lies between Sierra Madre

Mountains and Lovejoy Buttes, south of Llano. Mitchell's lake and "desert oasis" farming land are supplied with water piped from a ranch higher in foothills.

Desert Empire Ranch Rises in Antelope Valley

Fed by a 12-inch pipe flow of mountain water with a head pressure of 220 pounds to the square inch, a desert empire in miniature is sinking its roots into Antelope Valley.

The powerful, life-giving stream is spreading across some 15,000 acres between the Sierra Madre and Lovejoy Butte south of Llano.

As it seeps into the dry, fertile earth, an oasislike paradise takes shape on the 38-foot plateau which is the valley. This is the Mitchell Ranch.

Behind the valley's newest, big-scale development is Marc Mitchell, retired Los Angeles attorney, and his wife Evelyn. Who completed their dream ranch which represents an investment of \$200,000.

Anything Grows

Then, Mitchell believes, the dream will cease to be just a dream and become instead a reality in terms of an agricultural tract self-supporting and self-sufficient.

"Give this land water and it will grow anything," says Mitchell with the knowledge that he is repeating the founding phrase of Southern California.

Feeding upon the ranch are ready-made Hereford beef cattle that will soon become an annual herd of 500 meat animals which valleyites style "gold on the hoof."

Also, there today are the sands of rainbow trout in a man-made pool that will one day become tens of thousands of fish in three pools landscaped around the \$80,000 Mitchell home now under construction.

Water Plentiful

The Mitchells went into Antelope Valley with "eyes wide open."

"When I decided to retire two years ago, we toured the United States looking for a place where land and climate would give us a chance to follow our hobby—the raising of pointer and setter dogs.

"We wanted raw land but developable land and lots of it. I had to be cheap enough and I had to have plenty of water. We found it here."

The dream was born when Mitchell learned that Alec Krysiak, an Antelope rancher 240 feet higher up in the Sierra Madre foothills, had more water than he needed and was willing to pipe enough of it down for use on the Mitchell tract.

Birds Are Grown

The drop accounts for the tremendous pressure obtained on the acres now under development.

The pointers and setters came first, to be housed in a large kennel equipped with a huge deep freeze unit for horse meat used to feed the pets.

Next to go up were breeding pens for pheasants and quail. Already some 3000 of the latter have been released upon the terrain with about 350 pheasants. The range of the birds is limited automatically to the home ranch and to neighboring irrigated areas where food is available.

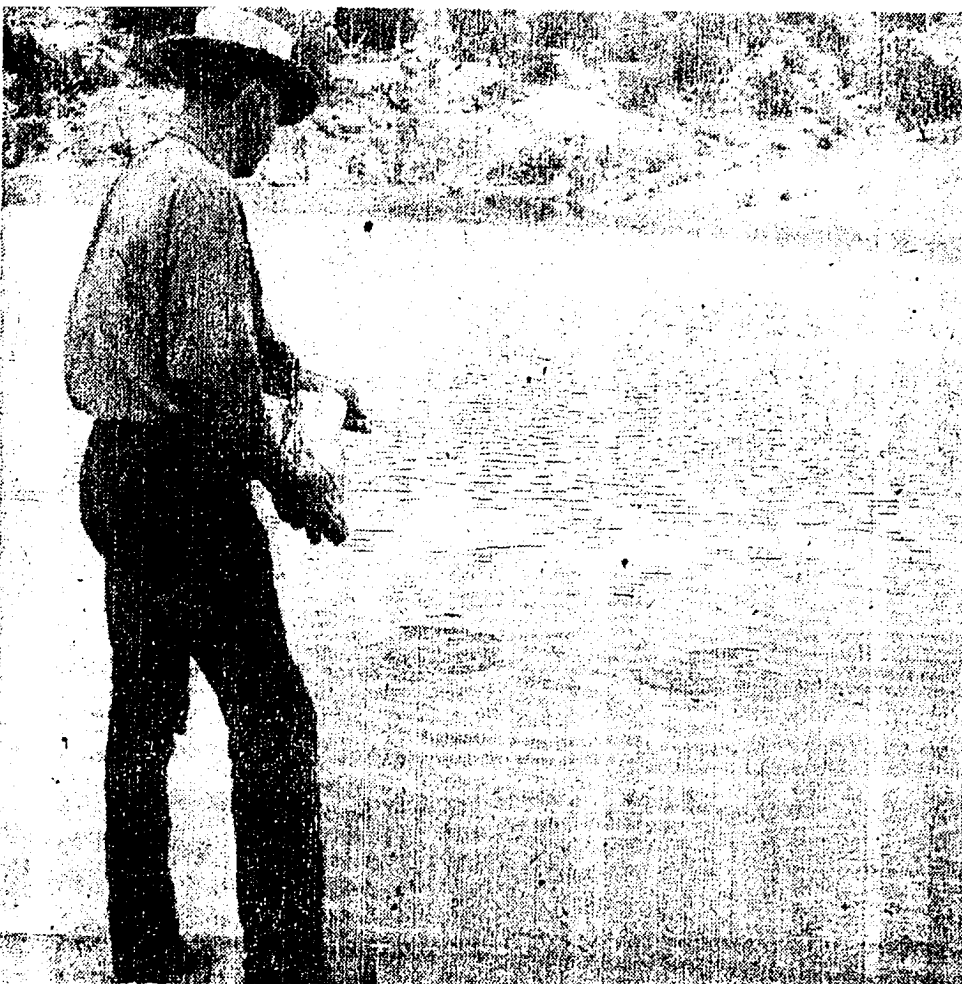
300 Coyotes Killed

Development goes on, under the guidance of John M. Coffeen, ranch manager, who, with other expert agronomists, R. W. Johnson and Walter Emerick, is overseeing conversion of the vast

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TROPHIES—Marc Mitchell holds trophy won by his dogs in retrieving trials. Bearskin is from Alaska trip.



FEEDING FISH—Agronomist B. W. Johnson throws food to trout in "desert empire" ranch of Marc Mitchell. There are thousands of rainbows in large man-made pool.

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DESERT EMPIRE

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increase into the envisioned cornucopia.

To Emerick, a retired game warden, falls the task of breeding quail and pheasants and raising the broods until they can wander on their own.

To both Emerick and Johnson the beginnings of the wild-life plantation was also the start of a never-ending war on coyotes, bobcats and other predators.

"In the first year we trapped, shot or otherwise killed 300 coyotes, 50 cats and any number of hawks," said Johnson.

One day soon the Mitchell estate will be a hunter's heaven. On the fish ponds already are alighting hundreds of ducks during the migrating season—mallard, widgin, teal.

Deer Attracted .

The watered bush will swarm with quail, pheasants and rabbit. Deer will come down from the high slopes, drawn by that flow of clear, cold water.

Even now their progenitors are roaming the acres under the clover, the grass and the alfalfa. Even now the setters and pointers leap and bark in the kennels. They hear the whir of quail coverts.

The Mitchell Ranch is looked upon in the valley as an undertaking that is more than a land development. It is another segment of the constant view of the valley's 30,000 citizens and a corroboration of their deeply held convictions.

For the Mitchell dream is but one of hundreds of dreams, big and little, that seem to hang quivering in the clear air of Ariz.

Mel Courson, unofficial "Mayor" of Palmdale and a 30-year resident, crystallized them all:

"Some day we'll get water from the Columbia River. It'll come, that water, and when it does this valley will feed half of California. Way most of us see it, we're about where Los Angeles was 75 years ago agriculturally. In those days, a few men saw what would come with water. It came."

All-Year Climate

Courson is echoed up and down the far-flung plateau. In industrialization through aircraft at Muroc, "world's greatest test field," and at Palmdale, "world's greatest airport." . . . And chickens. And turkeys. There's a certain man who came here broke five years ago. Now he's rich. Poultry. There's another

fellow. Same history. Turkeys.

Another. Alfalfa.

"Where there's water in Antelope, there's wealth. We've got enough water now for our population. Some day—"

So the Mitchell dream is only part of a bigger one.

It was a hot day in Los Angeles and no hotter in Antelope. Off to the south the Sierra Madres rose purplish to the clean, blue sky.

"By the middle of September," said Mitchell, pointing, "those peaks will be snow-covered. It's perfect here then. This is an all-year climate. We looked all over for a better one—and could not find it."

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